

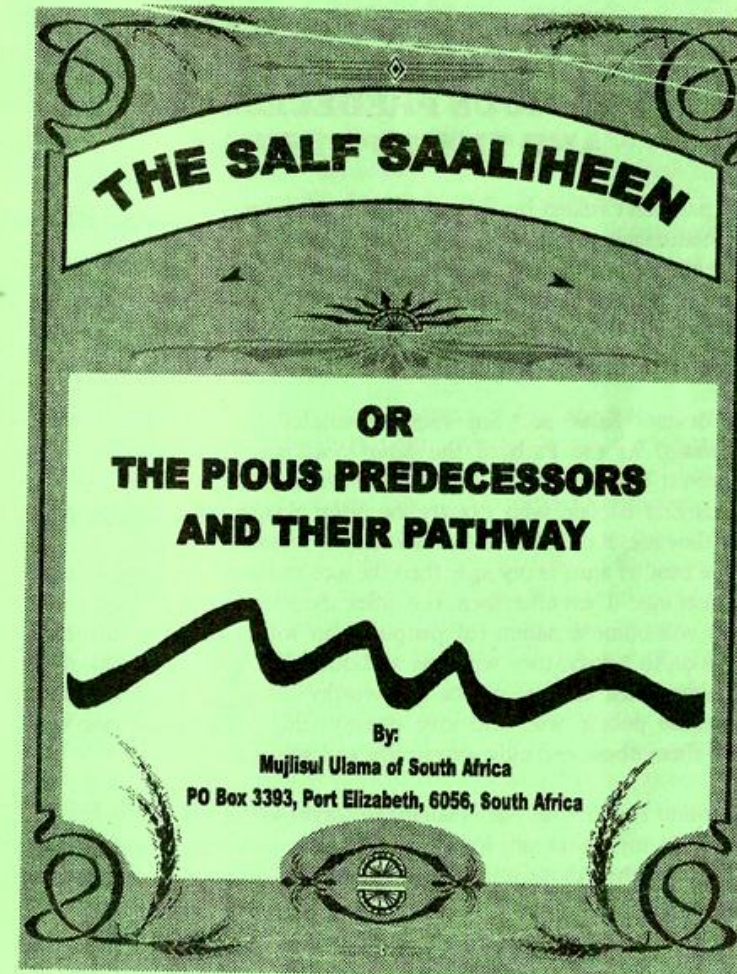
THE SALF SAALIHEEN

He narrated from Anas (radhiyallahu anhu) three Ahaadith; from Ibn Juz'i one Hadith; from Waathilah two Hadith; from Jaabir one Hadith; from Abdullah Bin Anas one Hadith; from Aishah Bint Ajrad one Hadith, and from Abdullah Bin Abi Aufa one Hadith."

The illustrious authorities of the Shariah of all Math-habs – Fuqaha and Muhadditheen – have lauded numerous accolades on Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh). Although all the Aimmah Mujtahideen have been applauded by the authorities, mention here in this brief article is made of only Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) in view of him being specifically targeted by Salafis for their venom.

Since the Imaams of the Math-habs are among the greatest and noblest members of the *Salaf*, and the Ummah has been making their Taqleed for the past almost fourteen centuries, it is pure satanic deception to propagate abandonment of this superior Taqleed in this age of corruption, kufr, bid'ah and dhalaal. The Salafis of this age with their ideology of abandoning the Taqleed of the Math-habs and adopting the taqleed of Ibn Taimiyyah are implying that for the first almost seven centuries of Islam's existence, the entire Ummah was astray and in error, and this error was discovered by Ibn Taimiyyah. This conclusion is contumacy at its highest. While believing that Ibn Taimiyyah had erred in his methodology is compliant with intelligence, the belief that the *Salaf* had been plodding the path of deviation with the Math-habs, is revolting to intelligence and Imaan.

The only path of *Najaat (Salvation)* for the Ummah in these times is firm adherence to the Math-habs. Beyond the confines of the four Math-habs is the way of dhalaal and kufr. The Ahlus Sunnah in this age comprises the followers of the Four Math-habs which are as old as Islam while the math-hab of the Salafis – the math-hab of Ibn Taimiyyah – is not an integral constituent of the Way of the *Salaf Saaliheen*. It is infinitely safer for the masses to be firm on the perceived and alleged 'errors' of their Imaam of the Math-hab they are following, than the supposed 'rectitude' of Ibn Taimiyyah.



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THE SALF SAALIHEEN OR THE PIOUS PREDECESSORS AND THEIR PATHWAY

In a pamphlet issued by the modernist *Salafi* sect who has in reality no relationship with the *Salaf-e-Saaliheen*, it is said: "...the first generation (the Companions (r) were called *As-Salaf As-Saalih* (The Pious Predecessors). The Messenger of Allah (s) and his Companions (r) and those that follow them in Ihsaan (beliefs, sayings and actions) are the *Salaf* of this Ummah."

The deviant *Salafi* sect has vainly attempted to categorize its path (*manhaaj*) as the Path of the *Salaf Saaliheen* whereas they (the modernist *Salafis*) are far from the *Manhaaj* of the *Salaf Saaliheen*. Let us first explain who exactly the *Salaf Saaliheen* are. Explaining who they are, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"The best of ages is my age, then the age of those who follow, then the next age. Then after them (i.e. after the Pious Men of these three ages) will come a nation (of people) who will testify without being called on to testify; they will vow without fulfilling (their vows); they will abuse trust and will not be trustworthy.Then afterwards will come people who will love obesity (their opulent lifestyle will make them obese and ugly, physically and spiritually)."

In another Hadith, our Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"Honour my Sahaabah, for verily they are your noblest; then those after them, then those after them. After them falsehood will become rampant."

The *Salaf Saaliheen* comprise the Sahaabah, Taabi-een and Tab-e-Taabieen. These three ages are collectively referred to as *Khairul Quroon* (the Best Eras). It was in these three eras that the entire

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Shariah was structured on a solid basis and systematically codified. All the Aimmah Mujtahideen, Muhadditheen, Mufasssireen and the most illustrious Fuqaha of the Ummah flourished during the *Khairul Quroon* epoch.

Those who do not follow the Path of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen – who were all among *Salaf Saaliheen* – are never on the Path of the *Salaf*. Imaam Abu Hanifah, Imaam Malik, Imaam Shaafi', Imaam Ahmad Bin Hambal and all the other Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen were of this noble era. The *Isnaad* of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen links up with Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) via the Link of the Sahaabah. Numerous among the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen were the direct Students of the Sahaabah.

These Aimmah Mujtahideen – the Students of the Sahaabah – were in turn the Asaatizah (Teachers and Mentors) of the Aimmah Mujtahideen of the Taabieen and Tab-e-Taabieen periods – all of them were the *Salaf Saaliheen*. Thus, the wicked contention that those who follow the illustrious Aimmah Mujtahideen such as Imaam Abu Hanifah, Malik and others are the 'blind' followers of 'ignoramus' and akin to the 'mushrikeen' who blindly followed their forefathers, is the whispering of Shaitaan who has misled these modernist so-called *Salafis* whose Imaam is NOT any one among the *Salaf Saaliheen*. Their Imaam is no other than Ibn Taimiyyah who appeared on the stage of Islamic history six centuries after the Sahaabah. Then their latest Imaam is Al-Albaani of this century. They blindly follow every iota which Al-Albaani has acquired from the *kutub* of Ibn Taimiyyah. Then they deceive people into the belief that they are mujtahideen who extract the masaa-il directly from the Qur'aan and Ahaadith when in reality this claim is a momentous and a preposterous fraud.

All the famous Math-habs existed during *Khairul Quroon* since all the Aimmah Mujtahideen were of that glorious epoch of Islam. Thus the *Manhaaj* of the Math-habs is the *Manhaaj* of the *Salaf Saaliheen*.

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On the contrary, the *manhaaj* of the Salafi sect of this age is the way of Ibn Taimiyyah who had veered sharply from the *Manhaaj* of the *Salaf Saaliheen*, hence he deviated into error manifest. Whilst the math-hab of Ibn Taimiyyah was acquired from *kutub* (books), the *Math-habs and Manhaaj* of the *Salaf Saaliheen* who included the noble Imaams of the Math-habs, were the glorious products of authentic *Naql* (Narration) which they acquired directly from the Sahaabah and the illustrious Aimmah Mujtahideen who were the Students of the Sahaabah. They did not acquire the Deen from books which were compiled centuries after their era.

The *Salaf Saaliheen* among whom the illustrious Imaams of the Math-habs occupy the highest and most elevated pedestal after the Sahaabah, verified and authenticated every Hadith which constitutes a *Mustadal* (Basis of Deduction and Formulation of Masaa-il) on the authority of *Ruwaat* (Reliable Narrators). Their Ilm of the Deen was FIRST HAND, not third class. While Ibn Taimiyyah's sources were *kutub* compiled and written centuries after the *Sahaabah*, the Sources of the Aimmah Mujtahideen were the noblest of the Ummah and of the highest category of authenticity – Sahaabah and Taabieen.

The current term 'salafi' as it applies to the Salafi sect of this age is a misnomer. It is a deceptive term which is utilized to mislead Muslims to believe that this deviate sect is the following of the *Salaf Saaliheen* when in the reality it is something entirely different. Whoever diverges from the *Manhaaj* of the Four Math-habs, has diverged from the *Manhaaj* of the *Salaf Saaliheen*, and fallen into error manifest.

The implied claim of the errant Salafis of this age is that the illustrious Students of the Sahaabah and their Students had missed the Road, hence their followers are 'blind followers of baatil'. Yet they themselves are the blind followers of Ibn Taimiyyah and Al-Albaani. Substituting a golden, superior Taqleed – the Taqleed of the *Salaf Saaliheen* – for an inferior taqleed – the taqleed of Ibn Taimiyyah – is pure self-deception.

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The Salafi contention that Ibn Taimiyyah's *manhaaj* was to acquire the *Ahkaam* of the Shariah directly from the sources implies that the Students of the Sahaabah and their Students – the Aimmah Mujtahideen – did not acquire their Deen from the Sources, viz. the Qur'aan and the Sunnah. There is nothing more blatantly audacious and false than this *baatil* propagation. The current Salafi sect follows the *manhaaj* of Ibn Taimiyyah while the Muqallideen of the Mathaahib follow the *Manhaaj* of the *Salaf Saaliheen* among whom were the Imaams of the Math-habs – the Aimmah Mujtahideen. Now what does *Aql* dictate? Should we follow the *Manhaaj* of the *Salaf Saaliheen* or the *manhaaj* of a scholar who appeared six centuries after the Sahaabah?

By having appropriated or misappropriated the term 'salafi', the deviates of the modern sect labour to create the impression that they are followers of the *Salaf Saaliheen*. But this is palpably false, for if they were truly on the *Manhaaj* of the *Salaf Saaliheen*, they would have followed the *Manhaaj* of the illustrious Aimmah Mujtahideen who were part of the *Salaf Saaliheen*. So, while they deceptively claim to be followers of the *Salaf Saaliheen*, they are in reality the blind followers of Ibn Taimiyyah.

The deviate Salafis have no *Isnaad* (authoritative Chain) to link them with Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Their furthest point in antiquity is Ibn Taimiyyah, whereas the Pivot of the Shariah of the Muqallideen of the Math-habs is Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). All the *Ahkaam* of the Shariah we adhere to are the effects and products of the Shariah which the Aimmah Mujtahideen acquired directly from the Sahaabah and from the Scholars who sat at the feet of the Sahaabah.

In their pamphlet, the Salafis state: "So in these aayats we have seen Allah's promise of reward of Paradise for those who follow the way of the Companions, & the threat of Hell-Fire for those who do not."

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Undoubtedly, this aayat applies with precision to the deviate Salafi sect because they have abandoned the Way of the Sahaabah who had imparted their *Manhaaj* to the Aimmah Mujtahideen and the *Salaf Saaliheen* in general. Thus those who follow Imaam Abu Hanifah and Imaam Maalik for example, are following the Way of the Companions, not those who follow the way of the seventh century Ibn Taimiyyah.

The vital question which the modernist Salafis should answer is: From whom did Imaam Abu Hanifah and Imaam Maalik learn to perform Wudhu and Salaat, etc., etc.? Were the Asaatizah of these illustrious Imaams deviates –Nauthubillaah!? Were their Mentors not on the *Manhaaj* of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)? Were the Asaatizah of these great Imaams not part of the *Salaf Saaliheen*? In fact they were the *Salaf Saaliheen*.

The deviate Salafis say further in their pamphlet: *"However, in order to crush any doubts that may remain, we turn to the authentic Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (s): "...So whoever lives on amongst you will see many differences, so stick to my Sunnah & the Sunnah of the Rightly-Guided, Right-Minded Caliphs, and bite onto it with your molar teeth." So the Sunnah is of two affairs; that of the Prophet(s) (Ahl-us-Sunnah) & that of the Companions (wal-Jama'ah)."*

The motive underlying the citation of this Hadith is to imply that the Aimmah Mujtahideen among whom were the Four Imaams, were not following the Sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). This is the only construction which can be posited for this citation because the Muqallideen blindly follow these illustrious Men of the *Salaf Saaliheen*. By stopping at the 'Companions', the deviates have attempted to peddle the idea that the illustrious Aimmah Mujtahideen were not part of the *Salaf Saaliheen* while Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) himself had declared unequivocally that the *Salaf*

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Saaliheen were the illustrious Men of Islam of the *Khairul Quroon* epoch.

Furthermore, if these noble members of the *Salaf Saaliheen* were not treading along the Path of the Sunnah, what makes Ibn Taimiyyah a follower of the Sunnah six centuries later, and what makes Al-Albaani a follower of the Sunnah 13 centuries later? It is pure *jahaalah* to even dream that Imaam Abu Hanifah and Imaam Maalik, etc. were not following the Sunnah, and that each and every verdict issued by them was not the effect of the Sunnah – of the Qur'aan and Ahaadith.

While the Muqallideen cite as their grounds of reference the *Salaf Saaliheen*, the modernist deviate Salafis of our times present as their 'proof' the likes of some Sheikh Ashgar and Sheikh Bin Ba'z, the Saudi government scholar. We are not interested in what these government scholars of this age say. The Salafis can enjoy themselves by making taqleed of Bin Ba'z and his likes. Our Taqleed is the Taqleed of the *Salaf Saaliheen* who had imparted to us the Shariah which they had acquired from the Sahaabah who in turn obtained it from Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). About this Shariah acquired from the *Salaf*, the Qur'aan Majeed declares:

"Then We have established you on a Shariah with regard to (all your) affairs. Therefore follow it, and do not follow the vain desires of those who do not know (i.e. the juhala)."

Indeed these modernist Salafis are most ignorant. They find issue and fault when we make Taqleed of the *Salaf Saaliheen*, while their compound ignorance blinds and bludgeons them into the taqleed of Bin Ba'z and his likes.

In their pamphlet the Salafis say: *"So now it should be clearly understood that following the Qur'an and the Sunnah according to the understandings and practical applications of the Salaf*

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(Companions & their followers)) is an obligation upon every Muslim."

Just imagine! In this belated 14th century of Islam's existence, the deviate Salafis are stating a truth which the Muqallideen have been adhering to since the time of the Sahaabah. In addition to this fact, only the Muqallideen of the Four Math-habs are "following the Qur'aan and the Sunnah according to the understandings and practical applications of the Salaf" while the Salafis of this age are following the way of Ibn Taimiyyah the 7th century luminary. What the *Salaf Aimmah Mujtahideen* had acquired from the Sahaabah and their followers has been transmitted by way of authentic narration to the Ummah from one generation to the other. On the other hand, the modernist Salafis, ignore what has come down to us from the *Salaf Saaliheen*, and they subject the Hadith to their personal opinion and interpretations in conspicuous isolation of the 'understandings and applications' of the *Salaf*. So, who are the true followers of the *Salaf Saaliheen*: The followers of the Four Math-habs or the modernist deviate Salafis who do not follow that *Manhaaj* which was acquired from the Sahaabah?

All the Ahaadith which the deviates quote in their pamphlet describe the followers of the Four Math-habs as the *Salaf* because only they are following the Sunnah of the Rasool (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the Sunnah of his Sahaabah (radhiyallahu anhum). There is not a single Hadith which supports the way of the modernist Salafis. As long as the Salafis of this era do not abandon their way of personal opinion, they will never qualify to be on the *Manhaaj* of the *Salaf Saaliheen*.

Brazenly and stupidly contradicting and indicting themselves, the deviate Salafis of our age say: "These elite individuals from amongst the Major Scholars & Great Imams of the Muslims have been undoubtedly recognized as the leaders of Islam for centuries now. They are the Mujaddids and Upright Scholars that the Prophet (s)

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instructed us to honor & follow, and no sane Muslim would ever begin to dispute their status, station or rank in this Deen. So I ask the noble reader: If one does not take their advice, then whose advice will one take??? Likewise, if one does not take his/her understanding of the Qur'an & Sunnah from the Salaf of this Ummah, then from where do they take their understanding???

This averment rebounds against the deviate Salafi sect of this age. They are the very people who do not take their "understanding of the Qur'aan and Sunnah from the Salaf". They take it from a luminary (Ibn Taimiyyah – died 728 Hijri) who never was among the *Salaf*. The Muqallideen of the Mathaahib on the other hand, take their understanding of the Qur'aan and Sunnah from the *Salaf* – from Imaam Abu Hanifah, Imaam Malik, Imaam Ahmad and Imaam Shaafi' (rahmatullah alayhim) who all are in close proximity to the Sahaabah. Thus, whoever does not acquire their understanding of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah from the illustrious Imaams of the Four Math-habs is a deviate, for he rejects the methodology of the *Salaf Saaliheen*. All authorities, from the age of the Sahaabah to the present, unanimously declare that the acquisition of understanding of the Qur'aan and Sunnah from the *Salaf Saaliheen* is Waajib, yet the modernist Salafi deviates reject this methodology, and resort to their personal and whimsical opinions, subjecting the Qur'aan and Hadith to their own understanding and to the understanding of the 7th century Ibn Taimiyyah and the 14th century Al-Albaani who was not even a qualified Aalim since he had no *Isnaad* to join his knowledge to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

Quite rightly has it been said that it is only an insane Muslim who would dispute the status of the *Salaf Saaliheen* among whom were the Aimmah of the Math-habs. These insane people are the modernist Salafi deviates who brand the superior and holy Taqleed of the Aimmah Mujtahideen as 'blind following' akin to the following by the mushrikeen of their idolater forefathers. In their pamphlet the modernist Salafis mention 25 illustrious authorities of the Shariah

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from the age of the Sahaabah to the 9th Islamic century, who all unanimously proclaim the incumbency of following the *Salaf Saaliheen*. Despite this concession, we find the deviate Salafis of this age rejecting each and every one of these illustrious authorities. They set aside the Taqleed of the *Salaf Saaliheen* and blindly adopt the taqleed of Ibn Taimiyyah as their *manhaaj*. Surely this is error and deviation manifest.

There is no gainsaying that it is gross *jahaalah* (ignorance) and satanic contumacy for people in this age to extract Ahaadith from the Hadith *kutub*, then ignoring the understanding of the *Salaf Saaliheen* relative to these Ahaadith, adopt the opinion which Ibn Taimiyyah offers for the Ahaadith.

Then they compound their *jahaalah* with palpable falsehood by claiming that such opinion is the view of the *Salaf*. The final limit of the knowledge of the modernist Salafis of this era is Ibn Taimiyyah. Beyond this point they have no entry into the domain of Ilm. They come within the scope of the Qur'aanic aayat:

"That is the limit of their knowledge..."

The slogan of the modernist Salafi sect is "*the Qur'aan and the Sunnah*". Under guise of this appealing slogan they condemn and brand the 14 century Taqleed of the *Salaf Saaliheen* as 'blind following', implying thereby that these illustrious Aimmah of the *Salaf Saaliheen* plodded the path of error. Thus they accuse the followers of the Four Math-habs which constitute the Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah to be in conflict with the *Manhaaj* of the *Salaf* when in reality the only valid *Manhaaj* of Haqq is the Way of the Four Math-habs because this is the Pathway of the *Salaf Saaliheen* which is the Sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the Sunnah of his Sahaabah. The Salafi slogan is therefore a massive deception.

While they portray themselves as followers of the *Salaf Saaliheen*, they are extremely far from and at violent odds with the *Salaf*. If they

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had been truly following the *Salaf* they would never have veered away from the Path of the Four Math-habs to adopt the inferior and incorrect taqleed of Ibn Taimiyyah who was not at all among the *Salaf* nor did he follow the *Manhaaj* of the *Salaf*. If Ibn Taimiyyah was a genuine follower of the *Salaf* he would not have clashed with such Shar'i *Ahkaam* on which there exists consensus of the *Salaf Saaliheen*. By way of example, consider just one example, the mas'alah of *Three Talaqs being THREE, not one*. According to the deviate Salafis of this age, Three Talaqs issued at once or in one session are one Talaq.

To substantiate their belief that three talaqs equal one talaq, the deviate Salafis cite some Ahaadith and the practice during the Khilaafat of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (radhiyallahu anhu) and the practice which existed for two years during the Khilaafat of Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu). Despite the fact that Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) after the first two years of his Khilaafat enacted the fatwa that three Talaq in a single session equal three Talaq, not one, and despite the fact the *Salaf*, viz. Sahaabah and the Aimmah Mujtahideen and the Fuqaha of all Four Math-habs upheld this fatwa unanimously, the deviate Salafis ignore it and revert to the ruling which had been abrogated by the *Ijma'* of the *Salaf* from the era of Hadhrat Umar's khilaafat.

In so doing the deviate Salafis of this age have submitted the Ahaadith to their own understanding or the understanding and opinion of Ibn Taimiyyah whereas the Ummah is required to take their understanding of the Qur'aan and Sunnah from the *Salaf Saaliheen* which is the *Manhaaj* of the Four Math-habs. This example conspicuously betrays the dishonesty of their slogan which they raise to mislead ignorant and unwary Muslims.

There are many such examples which substantiate the contention that these deviates have ignored the *Manhaaj* of the *Salaf* and are employing the 'Qur'aan and Sunnah' slogan deceptively. However,

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this is not the occasion for discussing such examples. If Allah Ta'ala wills, a special book on their deviations will be published.

Of extreme and vital importance is to ascertain who exactly were the Asaatizah of the illustrious Aimmah of the Four Math-habs. How did these Aimmah Mujtahideen acquire their Knowledge of the Deen and from whom? The entire edifice of the Deen is structured on the *Isnaad* of the Authorities. Just a cursory glance at the *Isnaad* of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) will establish that his knowledge was acquired directly from some Sahaabah and from Senior Students of the Sahaabah and their Students. In the Chain of some of the Hadith narrations of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) there is only ONE link connecting him to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

While some deny the *Taabi-yyat* (being a *Tab-ee*) of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh), none denies that he was a *Tab-e-Taab-ee*. Being a *Taabi-ee* (having linked up with some Sahaabah) and also having acquired his *Ilm* from some of the greatest *Taabieen*, Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) occupies a truly unique and golden pedestal in the firmament of Islamic Uloom. But in their private sessions, the deviate Salafis scandal about this illustrious *Waarith* (Heir) of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). This great Imaam (Imaam A'zam) is in fact the Father of all the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen who followed him, hence Imaam Shaafi' (rahmatullah alayh) said: "*We are the children of Abu Hanifah in Fiqh.*" In the presence of knowledgeable Hanafis, the deviate Salafis conduct themselves like Shiahs, for they utilize the Shiah doctrine of *taqiyyah* and praise Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) in public while they castigate him in their private sessions, thus bringing themselves within the scope of the Qur'aanic ayat:

"When they meet those who believe, they (the *Munaafiqeen*) say: 'We believe.' And, when they are in privacy with their *shayaateen*, they say: 'We are with you. Verily we are (only) mocking (the *Mu'mineen*).'" (Surah Baqarah, Aayat 14)

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This aayat was revealed to castigate the hypocrites. Our purpose for citing this verse is not to declare the deviate Salafis *munaafiqeen*, but is to show that they have an attitude similar to the *munaafiqeen*, and this is dangerous. They speak much of and praise the *Salaf*, but they deliberately and irrationally ignore the fact that these illustrious Aimmah Mujtahideen were the cream of the *Salaf* after the Sahaabah.

Imaam Jalaaluddin Suyuti (rahmatullah alayh), the illustrious Shaafi authority of the 10th Islamic century, in his treatise, *Tabyeedhus Saheefah fi Manaaghib Abi Hanifah*, enumerating the excellences of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) records the statements of the Muhadditheen in praise of Imaam A'zam:

* "Sam-aani said in *Al-Asbaab*: 'Abu Hanifah had totally engrossed himself in the quest of knowledge so much that he acquired (knowledge) which no one else had acquired. One day he entered in the presence of (the Khalifah) Mansoor while Isaa Bin Musaa was present. He (Isaa Bin Musaa) said to Mansoor: 'Today this is the greatest Aalim on earth'."

* "While Makki Bin Ibraaheem was discussing about Abu Hanifah, he said: 'He was the most knowledgeable of his age. I never saw a more pious person than him among the people of Kufa.'"

* "Yusuf Al-Qaadhi said: 'I did not see anyone more knowledgeable in the tafseer of Hadith than Abu Hanifah.'"

* "Yazeed Bin Haaron said: 'I met a thousand men (of Knowledge), and I wrote (Hadith) from most of them. Among them I did not see anyone more versed in fiqh, more pious and more knowledgeable than five persons.' The first one he narrated was Abu Hanifah. Ibn Abdul Barr narrated this episode in *Jaami Bayaanil Ilm*."

* "Al-Khateeb narrated that Shaddaad Bin Hakeem said: 'I did not see anyone with more knowledge than Abu Hanifah.'"

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* Muhammad Bin Sa'd Al-Kaatib narrated: 'I heard Abdullah Bin Daawood Al-Khurubeeni saying: 'It is incumbent on the people of Islam (the Ummah) to make dua for Abu Hanifah in their Salaat'. Then he mentioned that Abu Hanifah had guarded for them the Sunnah and Fiqh."

* "Abu Ja'far Shizaamaariyy narrated that Shaqeeq Balkhi said: 'Imaam Abu Hanifah was the most pious among men; the most knowledgeable among men, and the greatest worshipper among men."

* "Ibraaheem Bin Ikramah Makhzoomi said: 'I did not see any Aalim more pious, more abstemious, and more knowledgeable than Abu Hanifah."

* "Abdullah Bin Mubaarak said: 'I entered Kufa and asked its Ulama: "Who is the most learned in this city? All of them responded: 'Imaam Abu Hanifah."

* Khalf Bin Ayyub said: 'Knowledge was transmitted from Allah Ta'ala to Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), then to his Sahaabah, then to the Taabieen, then to Abu Hanifah and his companions. There is consensus of the Ummah (i.e. of the Ulama) that Abu Hanifah was a Faqeeh, a Mujtahid and a great Imaam in Fiqh."

* "Muhammad Bin Bishr said: Once when I visited Sufyaan Thauri, he asked: 'From where do you come?' I said: 'From Abu Hanifah.' He said: 'Verily, you have come from him who is the greatest Faqeeh on earth."

* "Muhammad Bin Mazaahim narrated: 'I heard Ibn Mubaarak saying: 'The greatest Faqeeh among mankind is Abu Hanifah. I have not seen his likes in Fiqh."

* "Yahya Bin Ma-een said: 'I heard Yahya Qataan saying: 'We did not hear better opinions (in Deeni matters) than the opinion of Abu Hanifah. We have accepted most of his statements."

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* "Ali Bin Madini said: 'I heard Abdur Razzaaq saying: 'Ma'mar said: 'I am not aware of anyone after Hasan Basri who expresses himself in Fiqah better than Abu Hanifah."

* "The Fuqaha when they adopt Qiyaas are the children of Abu Hanifah."

Imaam Suyuti said: "It is an established fact that Fiqah is pivoted on principles such as Hadith, the statements of the Sahaabah and the Taabieen, their differences, the knowledge of Naasikh and Mansookh of the Sunnah, etc. We find consensus of the Ulama that Abu Hanifah being a Faqeeh was necessarily a Haafiz of the Hadith of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Zahbi has enumerated him among the Huffaaz of Hadith."

Ibn Khaldoon says in *Al-Muqaddimah*: "The Imaam of the people of Iraq is Abu Hanifah Nu'maan Bin Thaabit. His rank in Fiqah is unattainable. The Fuqaha, especially Imaam Maalik and Imaam Shaafi', had testified to this."

"Ibn Nadeem said: "He (Imaam Abu Hanifah) was among the Taabieen. He met several Sahaabah. He was among the *Wara-een* (men of great piety) and *Zaahideen* (those who renounce the world)."

Writing in his *Tabyeedhus Saheefah*, Imaam Suyuti (rahmatullah alayh) says: "Imaam Abu Ma'shar Abdul Kareem Tabari Shaafi' has compiled a treatise on such (Hadith) narrations which Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) narrated from the Sahaabah. In his treatise he mentions:

'Abu Hanifah said: 'I met seven Ashaab of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). - Anas Bin Maalik, Abdullah Bin Juz'iz-Zubaidi, Jaabir Bin Abdullah, Ma'qal Bin Yasaar, Waathilah Bin Asqa', Aishah Bintr Ajrad and Abdullah Bin Abi Aufa (radhiyallahu anhum).'